



## DELTA STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL



## Moving Forward

To adopt a legally enforceable Delta Plan necessary to achieve the coequal goals

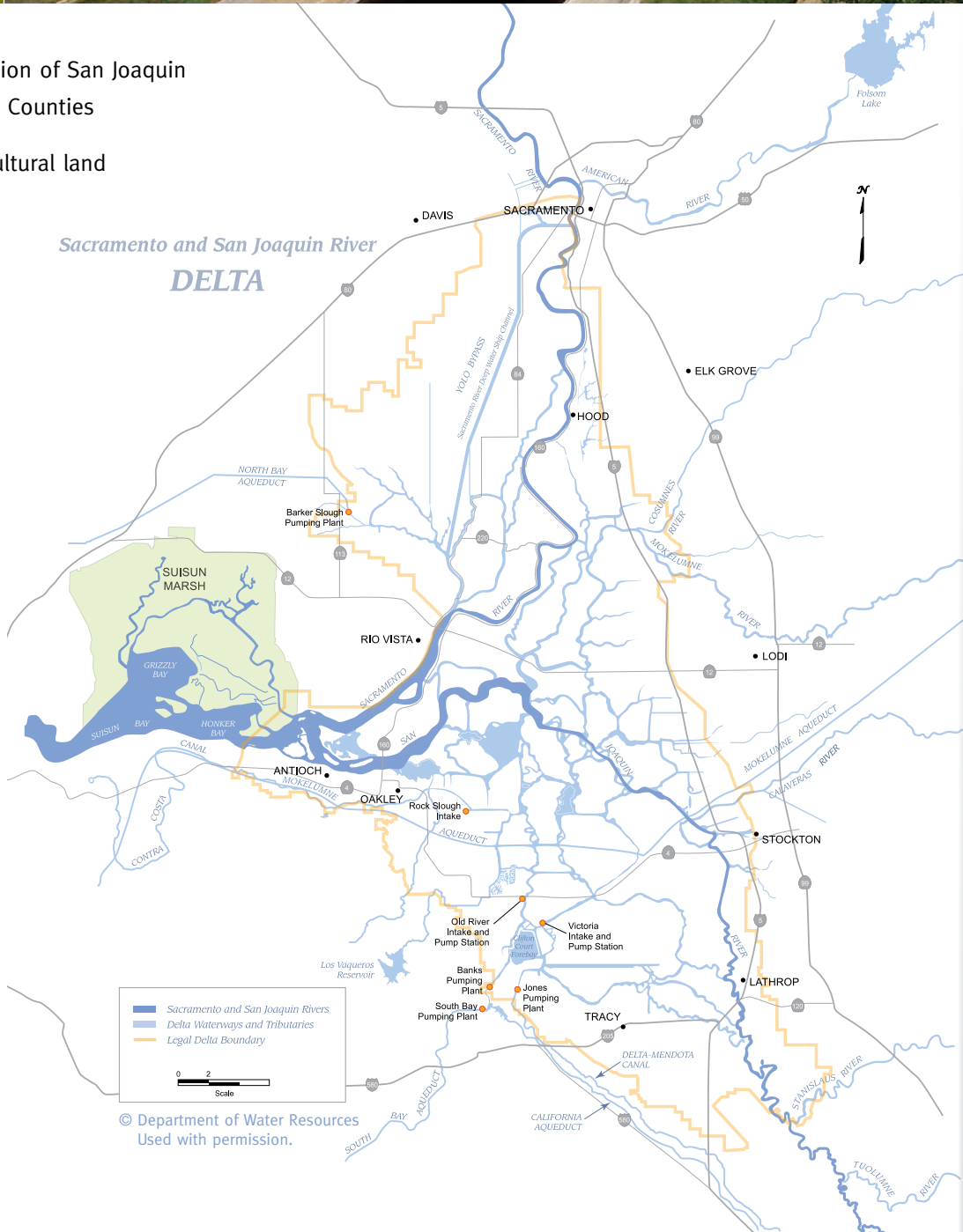


“Coequal goals” means the two goals of providing a more reliable water supply for California and protecting, restoring and enhancing the Delta ecosystem. The coequal goals shall be achieved in a manner that protects and enhances the unique cultural, recreational, natural resource and agricultural values of the Delta as an evolving place. (CA Water Code §85054)

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta is the West Coast’s largest estuary, providing habitat for a wide array of fish and wildlife. The Delta is a critical hub for California’s water supplies and important state infrastructure. The Delta is a major source for irrigating California’s farms and provides water for business and commerce, recreational uses and millions of California residents. And the Delta is so much more...



- **Location:** Southern portion of Sacramento County, northern portion of San Joaquin County, bordered on the west by Contra Costa, Solano and Yolo Counties
- **Total Acreage:** Nearly 740,000 acres of which 500,000 are agricultural land
- **Population:** More than 500,000
- **Jobs:** Nearly 150,000
- **Major Cities:** Sacramento, Stockton, West Sacramento, Oakley, Tracy and Rio Vista
- **Towns:** 14
- **Levees:** About 1,300 miles (*includes Suisun Marsh*)
- **Rivers Flowing into the Delta:** Sacramento, San Joaquin, Mokelumne and Cosumnes (*These rivers plus their tributaries carry nearly half of the state’s total annual mountain runoff.*)
- **Recreation:** 6.4 million visitor days annually
- **Wildlife:** 225 bird and 55 fish species, 260 non-native invasive species
- **Major Fish:** Delta smelt, longfin smelt, salmon, striped bass, steelhead, American shad and sturgeon
- **Major State Infrastructure:** Aqueducts, natural gas pipelines, electricity transmission lines, railroads, shipping channels and highways



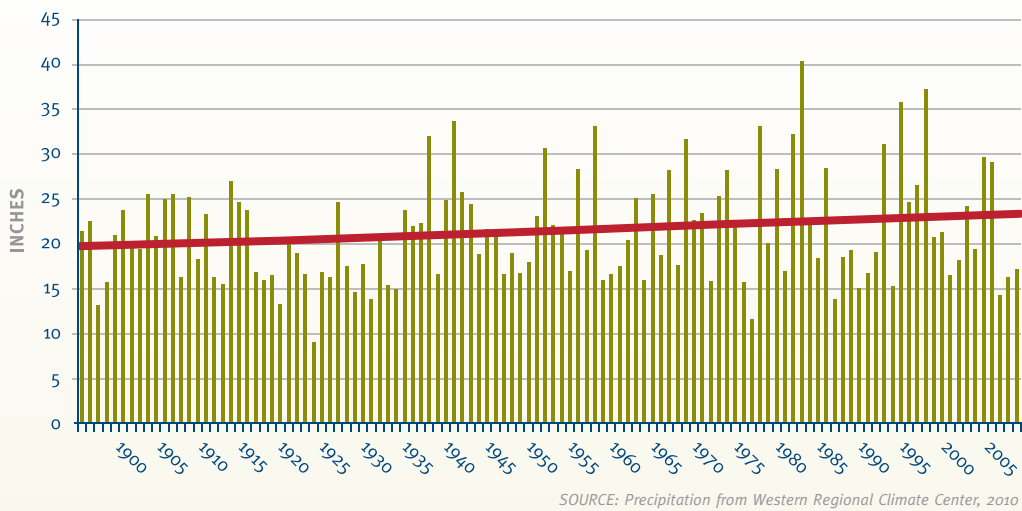
## California Water Supplies and the Delta

*The Delta is inextricably linked to statewide water supply issues that affect the Delta’s ability to function in a healthy, sustainable way.*

The year was 1890. Idaho and Wyoming were admitted as the 43rd and 44th states in the union. California’s population was 1.2 million with about six people per square mile. California recorded annual water data for the first time in 1890, receiving approximately 20 inches of rainfall, representing a little less than 200 million acre feet of water.\*

Today, California’s population has grown by 308 percent to nearly 37 million, representing 237 people per square mile. While California has experienced tremendous changes and growth over the last 121 years, the long-term average precipitation and total amount of water has seen only very small increases.

California Statewide Precipitation, 1895–2009



During this time, while California’s water supply has grown very slightly, the state’s water demand and use has increased tremendously. While water conservation has reached the consciousness of many, we have only begun to scratch the surface.

For decades, California has been using more water than nature provides—literally mortgaging our state’s future. Overusing groundwater basins in key regions of the state is not just spending the savings account but closing the bank. This practice of over consumption and over use of water, combined with natural environmental changes, has damaged the Delta ecosystem. These practices cannot continue.

California must live within its means when it comes to water supplies, and the Delta ecosystem must be improved in order to allow future water deliveries and ensure reliable water supplies.

The 2009 Legislative Water Package provides a roadmap to achieve this by placing a coequal value on protecting and improving the Delta ecosystem with creating a reliable water supply.

\* Precipitation provides approximately 97 percent of California water supplies.



# The California Delta – A Unique Natural Resource

*A critical nexus for California’s water supplies, agricultural industry, unique fisheries and wildlife and important state infrastructure*

### California’s Water Hub

The Delta serves as a unique “hub” in California’s water system, receiving runoff from other watersheds that goes for many beneficial uses throughout the state. The Delta provides a portion of the drinking water for more than 27 million Californians—nearly two-thirds of the state’s population. As the West Coast’s largest estuary, the Delta relies on water flows to ensure a healthy ecosystem while also providing water to irrigate more than

3 million acres of agricultural land. California’s water hub cannot continue to meet these demands.

Water deliveries from the Delta have been reduced significantly in recent years due to years of drought and other systemic problems in the Delta. Left unaddressed, this will create tremendous impacts on California’s economy, environment, agricultural industry and millions of residents throughout the state.

### The Delta Ecosystem

The Delta is the largest estuary in the West Coast and one of its most unique ecosystems, where fresh water from mountain runoff meets saltwater of the San Francisco Bay and Pacific Ocean. The Delta is home to 55 fish species, 750 animal and plant species and other wildlife supported by 1,000 miles of waterways and habitat. The Delta and Suisun Marsh lie in a central portion of the Pacific Flyway and provide vital migratory, wintering and breeding habitat for shorebirds and migratory birds. The Delta ecosystem’s many components are interdependent—change one, and the effects ripple through the system.

### A Unique Place to Live, Work and Play

There is no place in the world like the Delta—just ask any resident or first-time visitor. Located just minutes from major urban areas, the Delta’s 1,000 miles of meandering waterways provide opportunities for fishing, boating, waterskiing, picnicking, kayaking or just enjoying nature. Its unique small towns with historic buildings, residents with lineages that span generations, hundreds of family farms and marinas—both rustic and sophisticated—create a place like no other in the world.

### Problems in the Delta

The California Delta is truly in an unsustainable situation that is growing more serious each day. Today the Delta is failing to support native habitat and species such as salmon and delta smelt, caused by an extremely complex combination of natural and man-made conditions. In its natural state, the Delta is a vast wetlands that would flood seasonally. The development of an intricate levee system to channel water revealed very fertile agricultural land. However, these communities are in constant threat of flooding, and that will not change. The Delta

ecosystem is threatened by reduced fresh water flowing into the Delta from the mountains, increased water exports, years of drought, invasive species and impacts of urban growth. Furthering this crisis is the potential for major flooding from levee failures, earthquake and a projected rise in sea level. Collectively, these problems jeopardize water supply and water quality for the entire state of California with economic impacts estimated at several billion dollars. Additionally, this situation endangers the way of life for the region’s residents and visitors.



### Recent California Water Chronology

Adapted from the Delta Stewardship Council Water Resources White Paper

Central Valley Project Act passed.

Delta Protection Act resolves some issues of legal boundaries, salinity control and water export.

State Water Project Delta Pumps and California Aqueduct completed.

Coordinated Operation Agreement signed for Central Valley Project and State Water Project operations in the Delta.

Scientific surveys of the Delta and Suisun Marsh reveal ongoing, sweeping population crashes of native fisheries, including salmon and delta smelt.\* New law directs DWR to evaluate the future of the Delta.

State Water Project pumping operations shut down to protect endangered delta smelt.\* DWR estimates that Delta levees are vulnerable to massive failure if major earthquake occurs.\* Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force report says a healthy Delta ecosystem and a reliable water supply are the primary and coequal goals for sustainable management of the Delta.

Delta Stewardship Council begins work to develop legislatively mandated Delta Plan.

1931

1933

1951

1959

1961

1967

1982

1986

1999

2005

2006

2007

2009

2010



State Water Plan published, outlining utilization of water resources on a statewide basis.

State authorizes the Feather River Project Act (later to become the State Water Project). \* Central Valley Project Delta Pumps and Delta Mendota Canal completed.

DWR establishes Interagency Delta Committee to evaluate solutions to Delta problems.

Proposition 9, the Peripheral Canal package, overwhelmingly defeated in statewide vote.

Sacramento spittail minnow and spring-run Chinook salmon added to the federal endangered species list.

Coalition of fishing groups sues DWR, alleging the agency’s lack of proper legal authority to take endangered fish while exporting water from the Delta.

Legislature passes the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Reform Act, creating the Delta Stewardship Council as an independent state agency and directing the Council to develop a comprehensive management plan for the Delta by Jan. 1, 2012.



# Forward Vision

For decades, the Delta has been the subject of countless reports, studies, debates, legal actions and negotiations on water, ecosystem, flood, levee protection and other issues. In 2009, following recommendations by the multi-stakeholder Delta Vision Strategic Plan and other studies, the Legislature adopted the Comprehensive Water Package, establishing the Delta Stewardship Council and requiring development of a Delta Plan to build upon previous work and move forward toward a long-term sustainable Delta and water supply system for California.

## The Delta Stewardship Council

The Delta Stewardship Council, an independent state agency, consists of seven members who represent different parts of the state and offer diverse expertise in fields such as agriculture, science, the environment and public service. Of the seven, four are appointed by the Governor, one each by the Senate and Assembly, and the seventh is the Chair of the Delta Protection Commission.

The Council is mandated by law to develop, adopt and begin implementing a legally enforceable, comprehensive, long-term management plan for the Delta by Jan. 1, 2012.

The Delta Stewardship Council’s mandated tasks also include determining, on appeal, whether the Bay-Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP) meets statutory criteria in the Delta Reform Act for inclusion in the Delta Plan.

## The Delta Plan

The Delta Plan will establish a set of integrated, legally enforceable policies, strategies and actions to guide state and local agencies regarding land, water, air and other systems in the Delta in a manner that furthers the coequal goals of Delta restoration and water supply reliability (and is achieved in a way that protects and enhances the unique values of the Delta as an evolving place). Portions of the Plan’s scope and purview will reach beyond the legal Delta to encompass statewide decisions about water, flood management and the ecosystem that have a nexus to the Delta.

Meeting the coequal goals will require that proposed plans, programs and projects that impact the Delta and will be carried out, approved or funded by a state or local agency are consistent with the Delta Plan. As an independent state agency, the Council is tasked with reviewing and determining, on appeal, if a state or local agency’s project in the Delta is consistent with the provisions of the Delta Plan and the coequal goals.

These are complicated tasks—never before accomplished in California—that will require the Council to develop performance measures for assessing and tracking progress and changes to the health of the Delta ecosystem, fisheries and water supply reliability.

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(CA Water Code §85054)

# The Plan Must:

- MANAGE** the Delta’s water and environmental resources and the water resources of the state over the long term.
- PROTECT** and enhance the unique cultural, recreational and agricultural values of the California Delta as an evolving place.
- RESTORE** the Delta ecosystem, including its fisheries and wildlife, as the heart of a healthy estuary and wetland ecosystem.
- PROMOTE** statewide water conservation, water use efficiency and sustainable water use.
- IMPROVE** water quality to protect human health and the environment consistent with achieving water quality objectives in the Delta.
- IMPROVE** the water conveyance system and expand statewide water storage.
- REDUCE** risks to people, property and state interests in the Delta by effective emergency preparedness, appropriate land uses and investments in flood protection.
- ESTABLISH** a new governance structure with the authority, responsibility, accountability, scientific support and adequate and secure funding to achieve these objectives.

The policy of the State of California is to reduce reliance on the Delta in meeting California’s future water supply needs through a statewide strategy of investing in improved regional supplies, conservation and water use efficiency. Each region that depends on water from the Delta watershed shall improve its regional self-reliance for water through investment in water use efficiency, water recycling, advanced water technologies, local and regional water supply projects and improved regional coordination of local and regional water supply efforts. (CA Water Code §85020 and §85021)





## Delta Plan Grounded in Science

The Delta Stewardship Council is committed to developing a Delta Plan based on the best scientific information in a manner that is independent of political, geographic and financial interests.

The 2009 Comprehensive Water Package established an Independent Science Board (ISB) and the Delta Science Program with a lead scientist who reports to the Council. Together the Delta ISB and Delta Science Program provide the scientific support and oversight the Council needs to make decisions based on sound science.

The 10-member Delta ISB will review activities of science programs and projects for balance, rigor and use of best available science. Like all technical expert bodies, the Delta ISB will not make policy decisions, but will

provide the scientific foundation for such decisions to the Council and other agencies and organizations. The comments, advice and information from the Delta ISB is expected to augment scientific credibility, improve research clarity, advance the debate about Delta issues and seek better connectivity between science, management and policy.

At all times, the Delta ISB will exercise its independent judgment. Its findings, comments and reports will be transmitted directly to the Council and made public without editing or censorship by any person or entity.

## Identifying the Problems, Listening to the Issues, Making the Decisions that Move California Forward

The Delta Stewardship Council is committed to a process that involves the public while meeting the legislative mandate and timeline for developing a Delta Plan.

The Council's goal for public engagement is to provide opportunities for a broad range of stakeholders to participate in the Council's decision-making processes, including development and implementation of the Delta Plan.

In addition to the monthly (and sometimes twice monthly) Delta Stewardship Council meetings that are open to the public, the Council holds workshops and briefings to get input on specific topics and public meetings related to the environmental review process.

The Delta Stewardship Council web site [www.deltacouncil.ca.gov](http://www.deltacouncil.ca.gov), electronic mailing list and newsletter provide ongoing updates about the Council's work, background information about the legislative mandate and complex issues of the Delta, as well as opportunities for public input.





## The Time is Now



Decades have passed as various Delta studies, research efforts and plans have come and gone. Why? In large part because of a lack of legislative mandate, political support and cooperation among the key interests in the Delta. These years of inaction cannot continue, because the problems will magnify, not diminish.

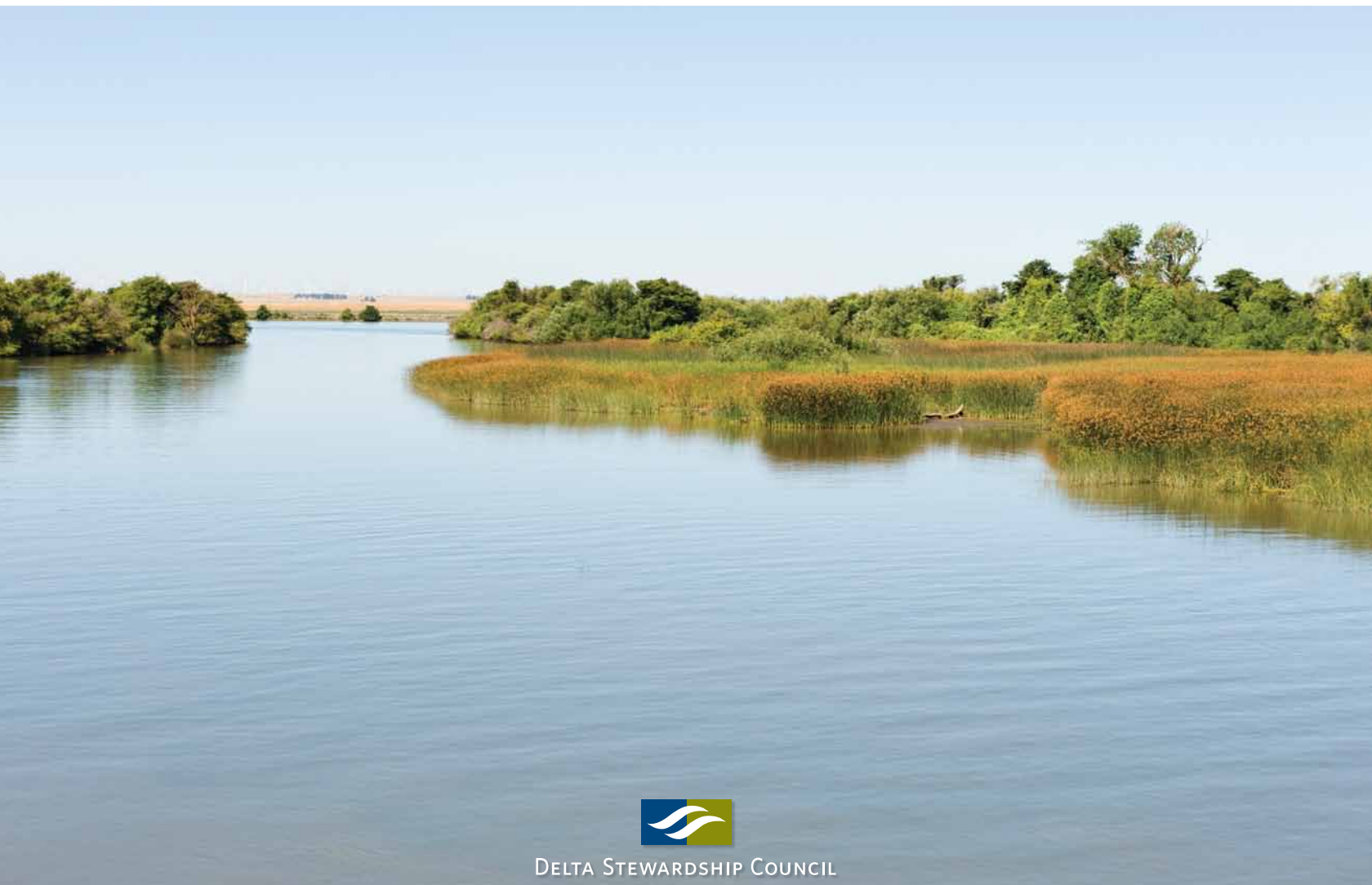
This current approach to the Delta is based on a process that began with Delta Vision, which created a stakeholder-based foundation that clearly identified the problems, the goals and objectives to address the problems. This led to passage of legislation to achieve those goals and objectives, and has put in motion the current phase (led by the Delta Stewardship Council) to develop a Delta Plan.

As mandated by the 2009 Comprehensive Water Package, the California Legislature has required the Council to move quickly to develop a Delta Plan by Jan. 1, 2012.

The Delta Stewardship Council is committed to not only developing the most comprehensive and effective plan for achieving the coequal goals but also to ensure its implementation.



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